

DEPARTMENTAL NOTICE		NUMBER: 4070-001
SUBJECT: Emergency Leave Transfer Program – Hurricane Katrina	DATE: December 13, 2005	
	OPI: Office of Human Capital Management	
CODIFICATION/EXPIRATION: Expires 1 year from date of issuance		

1 PURPOSE

On September 15, 2005, Departmental Administration announced a Department of Agriculture (USDA) Department-wide Emergency Leave Transfer Program (ELTP). The announcement outlined procedures for employees to donate annual leave to an undesignated pool for USDA employees who have been harmed by Hurricane Katrina. The purpose of this notice is to outline the procedures under which employees may apply and receive donated annual leave.

2 BACKGROUND

On September 1, 2005, the President directed the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to establish an ELTP to assist employees affected by Hurricane Katrina. The following day, the Director of OPM authorized agencies to administer an ELTP for Agency employees.

Thousands of USDA employees live and work in the area devastated by Hurricane Katrina. Many employees suffered damage to homes and some have been displaced from their normal worksites because USDA facilities are severely damaged or inaccessible. Some employees have been relocated to alternative worksites outside the normal commuting area and this relocation may pose additional hardships for employees.

The ELTP will assist employees in dealing with these issues and others in the aftermath of the hurricane. The ELTP permits employees to donate annual leave to employees who have been adversely affected by the hurricane. Emergency leave recipients may use donated annual leave without having to exhaust their own leave. The ELTP also permits recipients to use donated annual leave to care for a family member who has been adversely affected provided the family member has no reasonable access to other forms of assistance.

3 AUTHORITY

5 USC 6391, 5 CFR Part 630, subpart K, and OPM CPM-2005-17, dated September 2, 2005

4 RESPONSIBILITIES

a Employee Responsibilities:

- (1) Employees (or through their personal representative) may apply to become a Leave Recipient Under the ELTP.
- (2) A fillable form can be located directly on OPM's website at: http://www.opm.gov/Forms/pdf_fill/OPM1637.pdf
- (3) Employees will submit an application to their servicing Human Resources Office to include:
 - (a) The duty location of the employee's official position;
 - (b) The number of hours requested;
 - (c) Name, position title, and grade or pay level of employee;
 - (d) Statement describing his or her need for leave from ELTP; and
 - (e) Any additional information required by the servicing Human Resource Office to support the leave request.

b Servicing Human Resources Offices (SHROs) Responsibilities:

- (1) SHROs will:
 - (a) Make preliminary approvals/disapprovals of leave recipients based on administratively acceptable evidence;
 - (b) Obtain two agency level approvals prior to final approval from the Office of Human Capital Management (OHCM);
 - (c) Verify by release form that the personal representative of the affected employee is acting for, and has the permission of the employee;

- (d) Notify applicants of their approval or disapproval into the ELTP within 10 workdays after the date OHCM approves or disapproves the application. The agency must give the reasons for its disapproval of all or a portion of the requested leave;
 - (e) Maintain records of donations of annual leave and approval of leave recipients under this ELTP until further notice; and
 - (f) Ensure that time and attendance records are correctly adjusted for both donors and recipients.
- c OHCM Responsibilities:
 - (1) OHCM will:
 - (a) Determine and publish (at a future date) the deadline for employees to apply to become emergency leave recipients for the purposes of this disaster; and
 - (b) Give final leave approval or disapproval based on established USDA procedures and guidelines, the recommendation of the agency and the amount of hours contained in the bank.

5 SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

- a All leave in the bank will be accepted and awarded in whole hours only.
- b Donated annual leave that is not used by emergency leave recipients for the emergency must be returned to the leave donor(s). Donated annual leave that remains in the bank at the termination of the emergency will first be offered to OPM for other federal agencies who have employees affected by Hurricane Katrina and have been approved by OPM for a Government-wide transfer of leave. Remaining leave will be returned to leave donors proportional to the amount of annual leave donated by the employee. Emergency leave donors will be permitted to elect to have any unused donated annual leave restored in the current leave year or on the first day of the following leave year.
- c Since implementation of the ELTP represents a change to conditions of employment, agencies must fulfill their collective bargaining obligations with units who represent potential recipients before it can be effective for bargaining unit employees. No part of this regulation constitutes a waiver

of agency's managerial right to assign work or other management rights under Federal labor laws.

- d For the purpose of this ELTP an eligible family will be defined as:
 - (1) Spouse, and parents thereof;
 - (2) Children, including adopted children and spouses thereof;
 - (3) Parents;
 - (4) Brothers and sisters, and spouses thereof; and
 - (5) Any individual related by blood or affinity whose close association with the employee is the equivalent of a family relationship.
- e An emergency leave recipient may substitute donated annual leave retroactively (beginning no earlier than the date of the disaster or emergency) for any period of leave without pay used as a result of this emergency.
- f Recipients can receive no more than 240 hours of donated annual leave at any one time. Leave recipients who are granted and subsequently exhaust 240 hours of donated leave and find that it is necessary to request additional leave, may do so by applying to the program again and completing a new application. There is no limit on the number of times an employee may apply to receive leave up to the closing date of the program.
- g Each emergency leave recipient must use the donated annual leave for purposes related to the disaster or emergency for which the emergency leave was received.

6 INQUIRIES

Appendix A of this notice outlines individual Mission Area and Agency main points of contact; however, employees should refer to individual agency guidance for the appropriate submission of forms.

Appendix A

**USDA Emergency Leave Transfer Program
Hurricane Katrina
Points of Contact**

Agency	Contact	Phone Number	Address
OSEC	Rhonda Carr	202-720-6784	USDA/DA/ERS 1400 Independence Ave., SW Jamie Whitten Bldg., Room 17-W, Stop 1921 Washington, DC 20250-9710 Rhonda.carr@usda.gov
DA	Sharon Black	202-720-5576	USDA/DA/HRSD 1400 Independence Ave, SW, Room 27W Washington, DC 20250 SharonC.Black@usda.gov
RD	Norma Valdes	202-692-0198	USDA/RD/HRD 1400 Independence Ave, SW, Stop 0730 Washington, DC 20250-0730 Norma.valdes@wdc.usda.gov
FFSA	Patricia Gepford	816-926-6259	USDA/FFAS/HRD 6501 Beacon Dr Kansas City, MO 64133 Patricia.gepford@kcc.usda.gov
FNS	Mildred Kelley	703-305-1064	USDA/FNS/HRD/ERLB 3101 Park Center Drive Room 442 Alexandria, VA 22302 Mildred.Kelley@fns.usda.gov
FS	Debbie Rigden	703-605-0822	USDA/FS/WO/HRM 1601 North Kent St, Room 600-RPC Arlington, VA 22209 darigden@fs.fed.us
FSIS	Christina Williams	202-720-6287	USDA/FSIS/HRD/CCPB 1400 Independence Ave., SW Room 402 Annex Building Washington, DC 20250 Christina.Williams@fsis.usda.gov
NRCS	Fay Hill	202-720-5748	USDA/NRCS/HRD 1400 Independence Ave., SW Washington, DC 20250 Fay.hill@wdc.usda.gov

REE	Ted Nykiel	301-504-4426	ARS, Human Resources Division, Room 3-1145 5601 Sunnyside Ave. Beltsville, MD 20705 tnykiel@ars.usda.gov
MRP	Cindy Hadlich	612-336-3310	USDA, APHIS, HRO Butler Square West, 5 th Floor 100 North 6 th Street Minneapolis, MN 55403 Cindy.L.Hadlich@aphis.usda.gov
OIG	Debbie Crite	202-720-4460	USDA/OIG 1400 Independence Ave., SW Room 13E Washington, DC 20250-2306 dlcrite@oig.usda.gov
MMA	Tyrina Smith	202-690-0930	USDA, AMS, DP, MMA 1400 Independence Ave., SW Room 2752-S Washington, DC 20250-2306 Tyrina.smith@usda.gov